

a writer uses this abridgement
for loco citato forgetting that his last
reference occurred some pages before.

This I have found especially in references
to Michaux in the Synoptical Flora.

As a rule I think this should not be done
except where the reference is made
to some preceding species of the same
genus, and that the person using
the book should not be forced to search
through preceding genera, especially

as he often finds that in the locus citatus
the pages is not that which he wants —

My set of Gray's Botanical Contributions is unfortunately
incomplete and, as the limited space available in my house & indeed
that of my purse also prevent me from purchasing a complete
set of the volumes of the Amer. Acad. emy, it must so remain —
but there is one ^{paper} which I very much wish to procure. —
It appeared I think in two parts. 'On the Botany of Japan'
I do not know whether it was ever reprinted or
whether separate copies now & then appear for
sale but if it should ever come in your way I
shall be greatly obliged by your purchasing it
on my account

Excuse this long discussion of trifling
questions — Pray give the affectionate remembrances
of my wife & myself to Mr Gray and believe me

very truly yours

John Ball —

10 Southwell gardens London S W
18 Sept

My dear Mr Watson

Returning from a short tour in Scandinavia
I find I have at once read with deep interest the
Memorial of Asa Gray which I doubtless owe to
your kindness — I am tempted to write a few
words on a subject which was discussed with his
usual clearness & ability by our lamented friend
in several letters which I received from him.

Having been invited by Hooker to assist in the
management of the great Index Kewensis
which through the munificence of Charles Darwin
is now advancing towards completion I
was led to consider afresh many questions
connected with nomenclature & to consult
Gray with regard to some doubtful points.

I have always looked on most of the disputed
questions as of quite secondary importance
the only really important object being to attain
to an uniform system. Science is no longer
national but is cosmopolitan — and whatever
creates a difficulty between scientific men
of different countries in understanding
each thoroughly is distinctly mischievous

I should have written at greater length
but that I find in the September number
of the Journal of Botany edited by W. J. Britton
an article with which I in the main agree.
I own that I think there is a good deal to be
said for the view of retaining the original
specific name - and I was myself an
offender against the Geneva rule in the
Spicilegium Florae Marocanae - ~~to and it~~
if we were now starting afresh in systematic
Botany I am not sure on which side
I should range myself - But that is
not the case. The highest authorities
in the science have adopted the rule
48 of the Geneva laws and it can
cause nothing but confusion to attempt
to set up a different system of nomenclature.

I therefore am very anxious to see
that your American fellow-workers in
science will come to view the matter
in the same way that I do, and I
trust that your influence may tend to
that effect.

There is a small matter which I
mentioned to Hooker when I saw him
before my last departure from England
and as I found that he agreed with
me I put it now before you.

Science is long-lived and though the present
generation is not likely to make mistakes
posterity may do so - It is therefore very
desirable that the name of an author's
abridged in the designation of species should
not be open to ambiguity - American botanists
are very naturally accustomed to write
after the name of a species Gray & Watson -
but however unimportant a writer he was
John Edward Gray is sometimes quoted
as also is Hewett C. Watson. The proper
abridgements in these cases would in my
opinion be A. Gr. & S. Wats.

In using the Synoptical Flora I have
been struck by the fact that while Gray
habitually under the generic character gives
a reference to the Gen. Plant. he sometimes
omits to do so - and likewise that when
he retained a genus which has been merged
in the Gen. Plant. he sometimes notes the
fact but sometimes omits to do so. I think
that it would be well if in the remaining
parts of the work the practice which was
habitual with him were made an
invariable rule -

A further small point is with regard
to citations from a previous author with the
letters l.c. - It easily happens that in
referring to the same work in several
consecutive pages of a descriptive treatise